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Security Council

Seventy-third year

Provisional

8315th meeting
Monday, 23 July 2018, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Skoog	(Sweden)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Inchauste Jordán
	China	Mr. Zhang Dianbin
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Ipo
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Ndong Mba
	Ethiopia	Ms. Guadey
	France	Mr. Michon
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Tumysh
	Kuwait	Mr. Almunayekh
	Netherlands	Mr. Van Oosterom
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	Mr. Radomski
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Hickey
	United States of America	Mr. Cohen

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Afghanistan to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

After consultations among Council members, I have been authorized to make the following statement on their behalf:

"The Security Council notes the conclusion of the voter registration process in Afghanistan on 18 July, which according to preliminary data of the Independent Election Commission of Afghanistan saw more than 8.9 million Afghans register, including more than 3 million women, in order to exercise their democratic right to vote at the upcoming parliamentary and district council elections on 20 October 2018 and in the 2019 presidential elections.

"The Security Council recalls that the Afghan Government, political leaders and the Independent Election Commission and Electoral Complaints Commission carry the primary responsibility to create the necessary conditions for credible elections to take place.

"The Security Council emphasizes the need to address remaining challenges and to accelerate progress in electoral preparations, which requires without further delay the completion of outstanding issues, including the approval of candidates to fill critical vacancies within the Independent Election Commission and the Electoral Complaints Commission, the establishment of a central database of all registered voters that identifies irregularities, as well as the publication of a final list of candidates.

"The Security Council underscores the importance of developing sustainable democratic institutions in Afghanistan based on inclusive, transparent and credible elections, and stresses the need to promote the full and safe participation of women, as well as members of minority groups, including ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, both as voters and candidates.

"The Security Council reaffirms its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of Afghanistan and in this regard underscores its support to the Afghan electoral process as a fully Afghan-led and Afghan-owned process.

"The Security Council calls on all parties concerned to adhere to the fundamental requirements laid out by the electoral law and all other relevant regulations and to uphold the highest standards of integrity throughout this important and historic process, so that the final outcome reflects the will of the people of Afghanistan.

"The Security Council emphasizes the central role of UNAMA, in cooperation with the wider United Nations system, and in close consultation and coordination with the Government of Afghanistan, in supporting the organization of elections and the strengthening of electoral reform efforts by providing technical assistance and capacity-building and by coordinating international assistance efforts.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of addressing sexual and gender-based violence against female voters and candidates.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of a secure environment for conducting elections, condemns in the strongest terms those who resort to violence to obstruct the electoral process, including the Taliban and ISIL (Da'esh) affiliates, and commends the resiliency, progress and exceptional courage displayed by the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces in their leading role in securing their country.

"The Security Council welcomes the commitment by civil society to conduct observation at every polling station to monitor voting, counting, tabulating and transmission of results.

"The Security Council emphasizes the need for appropriate electoral observation missions to be in place, and welcomes the intention of international partners to provide support at the request of the

Afghan Government, and calls on all parties to facilitate and respect the observers' work.

"The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to the ability of all Afghan citizens throughout Afghanistan to exercise their civil and political rights, and reiterates its continued support for the Afghan Government and people of Afghanistan in their pursuit of democratic development, prosperity and durable peace.

"The Security Council expresses the intention to continue to closely follow the electoral process, including progress on the electoral preparations, and in this regard looks forward to the thorough verification of registered voters following the completion of the registration process, and requests UNAMA to provide an update to Council members on key developments and progress regarding electoral preparations within one month of the adoption of this statement."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2018/15.

I now give the floor to the representative of Afghanistan.

Mr. Saikal (Afghanistan): On behalf of the Government of Afghanistan and of the people of Afghanistan, allow me to thank the Security Council for taking a very firm stand on the course of democratization in our country. We have made some significant gains in that field over the past 18 years, and it is important to strengthen and consolidate those gains and to make sure that they become sustainable. There is absolutely no doubt that the people of Afghanistan are eager to see free, fair and credible parliamentary and district council elections in October and the presidential election next year.

Today's statement from the Security Council is a very clear sign that the international community has a keen interest in seeing free and fair elections in Afghanistan. Now, it is the job of us — the Government of Afghanistan, the relevant ministries and agencies of our Government, the political parties of Afghanistan, political leaders, civil society and, most important of all, the independent electoral bodies of our country — to put our hands together to pave the way for reasonably free and fair elections in October and a presidential election next year. I have no doubt that, in doing so, we enjoy the full support of the people of Afghanistan and of the international community, as symbolized by the statement of the Security Council today.

The meeting rose at 10.15 a.m.